

A BUNCH OF VULTURES

No matter how hard you prune
the wild strawberry bushes
on either side of the house
you end up with more strawberries
than you know what to do with
loose and tumbling out of baskets;
you flag down passing cars
and beg them to take some, you even offer
to throw in a kitten and a basket of tomatoes
because you also have more
kittens and tomatoes than you know
what to do with, and they're just
as hard to get rid of as strawberries
because people are more reluctant
to take something they
know you're desperate to get rid of
than they are to take something they themselves
would want to keep. You can't
appear too desperate in front of people, that's
for sure; it scares them
to see their own desperation reflected
in someone else, they're happier
when they think they're stealing from you --
that you're not just madly giving yourself
to any and all takers. On the other
hand how can you let all those strawberries
wilt in the shade when they could be servicing
a thousand shortcakes, and what man
of conscience could keep the "drowning option"
securely in his hip pocket for when the purring
and scratching gets to be too much
without exploring every other avenue?
The cars go by without stopping now.
But in winter, when the fields
turn icy and brown, they might slow down,
yes, they probably will slow down
remembering the wonderful strawberries
they almost bought from you last summer.

PROUD POEM

I'm not going to take that lying down
and I'm not going to take it standing up.
I'm going to take it sitting on my exercise bicycle
clocking the miles I could be riding away from you.